

MARK W. HITCHINS et. al.
Serial No.: 09/436,612

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BEST AVAILABLE COPY**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 5-11, 15-19 and 21 remain before the Examiner for reconsideration. Claims 2-4, 12-14 and 10 were previously canceled without prejudice. Claims 5-7 and 15-17 have been amended.

In the Office Action dated November 15, 2004, the Examiner indicated that:

This application is in condition for allowance except for the following formal matters:

Claim 5 depends on cancelled claim 4; additionally, the phrase 'the angle of taper' lacks antecedent basis. In claims 5-7 and 15-17, the phrase 'the angle of taper' also lacks antecedent basis.

The examiner respectfully requests applicant to review all the pending claims to ensure compliance with section 112 requirements.

Applicants have amended claims 5-7 and 15-17 to obviate the Examiner's objection to those claims. The amendments to these claims are solely to overcome the Examiner's objection to the claims based upon the formal matters set forth above and do not affect the scope of the claims or any equivalents thereto. Applicant believe that the claims, as amended, fully comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. Section 112.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the applicants respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the objections to the claims and arrange for an official Notice of Allowance to be issued in due course.

Respectfully submitted,

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By 

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